

# Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

Local Union



No. Forty

Hartford, New Haven, Middlesex, Tolland, Windham, New London Counties, State of Connecticut and Fisher's Island, State of N.Y.

100-A OLD FORGE ROAD • ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT 06067

Telephone: (860) 529-2616 • (CT Only) 1-800-201-5840 • FAX: (860) 529-3177

## TESTIMONY of

Jeremy Zeedyk

Business Representative

SMART Local Union 40

February 26, 2015

Honorable Senator Winfield, Honorable Representative Tercyak, and esteemed members of the Labor Committee:

The Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation (SMART) International Union Local 40 submits this testimony in support of: H.B. No. 6705 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING THE PREVAILING WAGE BE PAID ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS THAT RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE STATE OR ANY AGENCY OF THE STATE..

SMART Local 40 is a building and construction trades and production union which represents over 1000 working families who are employed by approximately 50 signatory construction contractors constructing, renovating and testing buildings throughout Connecticut and the region, many of which are State of Connecticut projects. We are one of the 14 unions commonly referred to as the "Building Trades".

Local 40 believes that whenever public money is spent for construction, remodeling, refinishing, refurbishing, rehabilitation, alteration or repair of any building or road, that money should be subject to the same scrutiny and conditions of other State projects.

DECD and other State funded programs are designed to stimulate and grow the economy of the cities and towns of Connecticut. There is no better way to begin that growth than by taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the workers on those projects are paid well and are residents of Connecticut. Far too often Connecticut taxpayers are funding projects that allow, and in fact, encourage workers from far away states to travel into Connecticut for a project and then they leave without contributing in a meaningful way to our local economy. To make matters worse these companies do not cover their employees by workman's compensation coverage, unemployment or other basic protections.

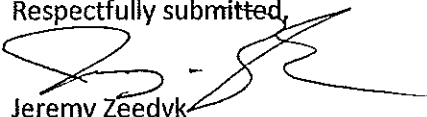
Recently a large company brought in workers to perform dangerous steel erection on a very large building for which they received generous tax breaks. One of the workers fell off the steel and was badly injured. It was discovered by the Department of Labor that the workers were working illegally in this country and were not covered by their employer for any injuries. It is time for this to change.

Some companies already are voluntarily paying prevailing wages as well as making local hiring goals a condition of their projects. Alexion in New Haven is one such example of a company who has chosen to be a good corporate citizen by giving back to the community that gave them so much when they were

This bill would help to ensure that workers in this state have an equal opportunity to work on these projects and contractors in this area will be able to compete with out of state contractors on an equal and level playing field. For every dollar spent on public construction projects, a \$1.57 is generated (Zinn, 2010). We want the money to be reinvested in Connecticut, rather than being brought back out of state.

SMART Local 40 looks forward to continuing this discussion with the committee and offering input and solutions to this and other issues concerning the construction industry.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Zeedyk', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeremy Zeedyk  
Business Representative  
SMART Union Local 40